

King Leon: The Story of Grey Team

by Zachary Watkins

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Summary: The members of Grey Team are some of the fewest Spartans to actually be MIA. After being on a mission far outside the confines of UNSC space, and on battlefields too distant to be easily recalled, they have now missing for over a year. What happened?

## 1. Prologue

\*\*King Leon

> The Story of Gray Team<strong>\_

\*\*Prologue:

> A Story of Spartans<strong>

\*\*1200 hours, August 17, 2547

> Aboard the UNSC <em>Save Haven<em>, Gray Team's bunk\*\*

Leon sometimes wondered what he was doing here. Being away from Earth and the colonies for so long was almost to much. "Why couldn't we have simple missions, like Blue and Green Team? Go here, kill Covenant scum, come back; nice and easy" he would think. But he wouldn't complain. They were Spartan soldiers of the UNSC Navy. It was their duty to follow orders; even if they hated doing them. Even if it meant they were going to die.

Gray Team was created for the sole purpose of doing the crap no-one else wanted to. Most soldiers hated sleeping in the Freezer.

Traveling Slipspace for years at a time just to get to the mission would be extremely annoying to any member of the UNSC; especially Spartans. They hated space. They preferred the nice, cold ground, where you don't float off. When it takes 5 years to do one mission, it was enough to drive you insane. But this was Gray Team's duty. And they kept their mouth shut and did their duty, like a good soldier.

Gray Team's official assignment was "Extreme long-range missions that benefit the UNSC and UNSC operations". Their ship was called

Enduring Journey. She was created especially for ELR missions; regular Shaw-Fujikawa Engines were not made to be in use for over a year. A "long" jump was considered to be from 5 to 6 months.

Enduring Journey had to be part camel; since they would be gone for up to 3-5 years at a time, she had to pack quite a lot of supplies.

When not on duty, Gray Team and the Enduring Journey stayed on the Mobile Station Safe Haven. Safe Haven was rebuilt from an old Mobile Station, named Forever Lingering, that had been decommissioned because of extensive damage from a surprise Rebel assault. The old station was rebuilt solely for Extreme Long Range Missions, and was built to be a base for all ELRM-based personnel. As Safe Haven was rebuilt for only one type of mission, it was not as well-equipped as most Stations. Since it took so long to do one mission, Safe Haven was home to many squads that completed their own Extreme Long-Range Missions. Gray Team was the only non-marine Squad in the entire base. Most other squads had only completed one mission, but a few had completed two.

The missions Gray Team had done consisted of stopping Rebel-Pirate operations in faraway systems. Capturing and interrogating high-ranking Rebels was the only way of obtaining the knowledge of where to find the stations. As of late, they had been resorting to self-destruction, so the A.I.s weren't able to get the information off the ships. The mission objective was to place a bomb in the heart of the space station or planet-side base. Three missions had been completed. Three Rebel-Pirate bases destroyed, and it only took 12 years.

A few ensigns on Enduring Journey openly wondered what the point was of sending three highly valuable Spartans to Rebel bases when the Covenant so close to home, especially when it took so long to finish the missions. The answer: the Rebels were creating weapons far too serious for us to just ignore. Their wasn't any time to steal information, they said. They had a point; the Covenant were knocking at our doorstep, and we had to dispose of the Rebel-Pirates now before they became a problem later.

After a few weeks of doing nothing but playing card and word game, and interacting with the Staff Members, news came from the higher-ups that Gray Team was to go on their first Covenant ELRM. Unfortunately, none of them could see the future; then maybe they would have known not to go.

Gray Team was composed of three Spartans; Team Leader Leon (Spartan Designation: SPARTAN-048), Paul (Spartan Designation: SPARTAN-021), and Terri (Spartan Designation: SPARTAN-080). Paul was the kind of guy that you can trust your life with, even if you just met him. He just had an aura around him that said that you could trust him. He made friends with the marines easily, which was rare among Spartans. Paul was all business, and didn't talk much. Terri was an oddity and the exact opposite of Paul. Whenever they were off duty, Terri talked up a storm. Since she liked to talk her mind, she annoyed people a lot. But Terri was a Spartan; with being a Spartan comes discipline, and Terri was no exception. Whenever in a combat situation, it was like she flipped a switch. And despite Terri and Paul being complete opposites, they got along like brother and sister.

They all were like brothers and sisters.

Every soldier in the UNSC is required to have a Final Word speech that is to be read at the funeral. What follows is an excerpt from Leon's: "My real name is Leonidas; you know, after the King of Sparta? I never knew my mother, but I bet she thought it was real cute to name me that. When I first started to understand the SPARTAN project and the Earth's history, I thought my name was so odd. I mean, I was named after the king of Sparta, and I was going to be a Spartan?" Only his fellow Spartans called him Leon. To everyone else, he was another face-less Spartan. Except Dr. Catherine Halsey. Dr Halsey was like a mother figure to the Spartans; although they never talked about it, Leon was sure that every single Spartan felt the same way.

After the Lieutenant on the other end of the intercom was done telling them they'd be doing a Covenant ELRM, they started talking about the new mission. "They" meaning Terri talking at a mile-a-minute, Leon throwing in a sentence or two every once and awhile, and Paul nodding his head. About five minutes after the announcement, Gray Team heard footsteps coming towards the nearby door that led into the room, along with some other sound they couldn't distinguish. Any Spartan could hear a pin drop in the next room through a full blast door if the setting was right. By the time the door opened, they had long been silent, awaiting the visitor.

The metallic "swoosh" of the door swinging open was followed by the "pang" of metal on metal as Lieutenant Commander Rita "Peg-Leg" Thronson walked in. Lieutenant Commander Thronson had lost a leg during a Covenant boarding attack on a previous ship; the Emergency Blast Door closed on her while running to the Escape Pods. She had to cut off a leg with a nearby Covenant Energy Sword. Leon immateriality realized the noise they heard was the metal stilt the doctors had given her. Being away from civilization so much meant supplies sent could only be the necessities. Their wouldn't be any time to get her a prosthetic until she returned.

All three Spartans stood up immediately and saluted the Lieutenant Commander. She returned it, and the Spartans let their arms fall, but didn't stray from being at attention. "Evening, Gray Team. I believe Lieutenant Quial informed you of your mission? I am here to brief you in detail." After a motion from Rita, all four of them sat down. "As I'm sure you know, those Covenant bastards make sure to self-destruct when boarding is eminent. Hell, maybe one of their Captains got a little too fat-headed, and thought he could fight us off; fool didn't know who he was dealing with, did he? After all personal of the ship had been dealt with, we used our A.I.s to get information from the ship. Just like what we used to do with the Rebels, before they wised up.

"Intel gained from the ship's computers have told us about a Covenant installation an Extra Long-Range jump away. Apparently, the station is a reverse-engineering facility; they bring dead ships back their to get information on us. The bastards have some serious tech; they can still gain knowledge of us through our ships, even when they have self-destructed. By "shutting down" the facility, it would halt Human information learned by the Covenant. Of course, we're shit out of luck if they have more than one of these facilities; but destroying this one is still going to hurt 'em.

"We leave in exactly 28 minutes. Prepare and load your equipment into the Enduring Journey, and head to the Cyro room to freeze up. We got a long trip ahead of us. Any questions?" We all shook our head, and Lieutenant Commander Thronson nodded. "Good. You have your orders." After saluting the Spartans, Lieutenant Commander Rita Thronson left the room.

## 2. Chapter 0

\*\*Chapter Zero:

> Cold Coffin<strong>

\*\*1250 hours, August 17, 2547

> Aboard the UNSC <strong>\_\*\*Enduring Journey\*\*\_

It took Gray Team only three minutes to load their weapons and equipment onto the ship. 20 minutes later, the Staff Members of the Enduring Journey \_were finished loading supplies and after another five minutes they were done warming her up. The three Spartans marches towards the Cyro Room, silently. Even Terri was quiet at the thought of being frozen for-how long would it take? The first ELR mission took 2 and half years to get to the mission and back, and the other two took 2 years back and forth.

After punching in the code for the Cyro Room door to open, the three Spartans were hit with the usual smell; a cold and moldy stench that seemed unnatural. They had already stored their MJOLNIR Armor. Wearing clothes while frozen was hazardous; the material would be frozen to your skin. The armor might kill you. They met with Lieutenant (Junior Grade ) Client Tresim, who was the Cryogenic Operator of the Enduring Journey. He stood at a small Main Computer where he would direct the delicate operation of correctly freezing a person. Around him were five Ensigns furiously tapping away at their keyboards.

"Welcome Spartans. Early, as usual. Well, let's get to it. We could wait until the designated time before we put you to sleep, or . . .?", "We are ready as soon as you are, Lieutenant." Leon told him, Client smiled, and said, "Good. You three know what to do. Once you are done undressing, just lie in the Cyro Pods." Leon, Paul, and Terri walked over to separate stalls and undressed, and after packing their clothes and various accessories into their lockers, they got into their pods.

Client nodded at one of the ensigns. After tapping a few keys of his keyboard, the Plexiglass tops of the pods closed shut. The Lieutenant's voice came out of intercoms located on the side of the pods; "This trip will take 2 and a quarter years to get there. There will be breaks 3 times, every eight months, for exercise and stretching. See you soon, soldiers." All Leon could see was a way-to bright light above him, so he closed his eyes. Seconds later, a cold, moldy mist filled the pod, and Leon fell quickly asleep.

## 3. Chapter 1

\*\*Chapter One

> Preparation<strong>

\*\*1300 hours, April 17, 2548

> Aboard the UNSC *Enduring Journey*<em>\*\*

Dreaming. Leon knew he was. He always knew when he was dreaming. But it wasn't the usual dream; no, this time, Leon was running. Running towards a giant light. But it was so far away. He ran for so long. It felt like he had been running for an eternity. Leon knew he would never reach it. . . but Leon was a Spartan, and Spartans never give up. So he had to keep running. And it didn't matter if he couldn't reach the light; he had to keep trying. Keep trying until he couldn't run anymore. Keep trying until he was dead.

Leon wasn't running anymore. He was lying in a coffin. But the light was still there, above him. He reached out to touch it; he was so close. . . but his hand stopped; he was blocked by an invisible force, and Leon suddenly realized where he was.

"The grogginess will wear off after you walk around a bit. Okay, Richard, open the pods." the familiar voice drifted through him, and Leon had to struggle to understand it. Moments later, the near-invisible Plexiglass lids slid open, and a blast of fresh air made him gasp for air. Leon jumped forward out of the metal, moldy coffin, and threw up a bit in a nearby container. He glanced over to see Terri doing the same. Paul was merely sitting in his pod, awaiting his instructions.

"24-Hour break, Spartans. You know where the showers are. After you are done dressing yourselves, Commander Bricket would like to have a word with you." Lieutenant (JG) Clent Tresim sounded tired; understandably. Leon figured he and his ensigns had just been defrosted. Even after a 30-minute shower and a full run around the ship, it took most people the whole day to get over being in a Cyro Pod for 8 months.

After Gray Team had taken a five minute shower, and had redressed themselves with the appropriate dress, the three Spartans marched towards the Observation Deck, where Commander O'Saium Bricket liked to spend his time. Although it was against regulation for the Commander to entertain himself in the Off-Duty area, Commander Bricket claimed he had full confidence in his Lieutenants to run his ship. Most just thought he was lazy.

When the Spartans entered the room, Commander Bricket was at a nearby observation window, hands behind his back, watching the stars go by in normal space. Leon saluted, and his brother and sister followed suit. "Commander Bricket, sir, Gray Team reporting as ordered."

Although the Commander didn't turn around, he did say, "At ease, Spartans. I'm glad you decided to join me. It gets lonely here, by myself. But the stars keep me company. Beautiful, aren't they? The stars. While in Slipspace, the stars disappear. It doesn't feel exactly natural. I asked you to come here to show you the beauty of space, and how precious it is. We take advantage of Space. We must always remember everything that could go wrong here. Too few people respect the gifts we are allowed to have. Remember, Spartans: Any and everything could go wrong in Space. . . so when you head to the Covenant Facility, remember to respect every slight benefit you are given while you can. . . or you might never get a chance too."

"Gee, do you think the Commander has gone a bit eccentric? I mean, he was talking about a lot of crazy stuff. Space isn't a person, right? I think he's gone a bit- " "That's enough, Terri." Leon cut Terri off before she said something she would regret; he made a slight motion towards a nearby camera. Terri gave a barely-noticeable nod. On a starship, there was no such thing as privacy.

Gray Team was walking towards the exercise rooms. After 8 months of "sleepy-time", as new ensigns called it, three hours of work-out was mandatory over the 24-hour break period. When they got there, they entered Exercise Room 3. Inside, three marines and two staff members were on various work-out equipment. The marines were the sole infantry defense against boarding parties. Leon knew that some people felt Spartans overshadowed the backbone of the UNSC; dislike wasn't uncommon from regular soldiers. To prevent any hostilities, Leon had already told them to keep the work-out down to a regular-human level.

21 hours later, after all the personnel of the Enduring Journey has loosened up their muscles and had a period to themselves, Gray Team was called back to the Cyro Room to be frosted. 21 hours isn't a good trade-off for 8 months, Leon thought. The last two breaks were just as monotonous. Commander Bricket didn't ask to see them anymore, and Leon didn't want to bother him. He felt Terri had a point; all this time in space may have gotten to him.

27 months after they had first left the Safe Haven, and 19 months after the first break, Spartan 048 awoke for the last time; that is, until they returned.

If they returned. A lot of things had been bothering Leon; Covenant Elites were a proud race, but they weren't stupid. And they had excellent Leaders. Why would the Commander of the ship let UNSC board? Very few Covenant ships didn't self-destruct when defeated in battle. Maybe Lieutenant Commander Thronson was right; we don't understand Elite culture and tradition entirely. Maybe one HAD gotten a little to full of himself, and thought he could fight the boarders off. All Leon knew was that his mission objective was to place a bomb in the middle of the facility, or as close to it as they could get. And no matter what awaited him there, he would not fail that one objective.

#### 4. Chapter 2

\*\*Chapter Two  
> The End<strong>

\*\*1300 hours, August 18, 2549  
> Aboard the UNSC <em>Enduring Journey<em>\*\*\*\*  
> <strong>

Leon threw a Battle Pack towards his teammates, and sat down on a nearby bench. In front of him were boxes filled with the equipment they would bring. Paul was the Heavy Weapons and Equipment Specialist; his B-Pack would carry one M19 SSM "Jackhammer" Rocket Launcher, 2 spare Rockets for said Launcher, his personal Fury TAC-nuke, and one HAVOK Nuclear Warhead and remote detonator for a "just in case" emergency. As Terri was the Explosive Specialist of the team, her B-Pack consisted of 3 C-12 Shaped-charges and 5 Satchel

Charges for getting through locked doors and blast doors, as well as her own Fury TAC-nuke. Leon's consisted of emergency radio equipment, 30 mags of extra ammo for the MA5B ICWS Assault Rifles they would bring, 15 mags of extra ammo for the M6D Pistols, his own TAC-nuke, and an Extensive Medical Kit.

After they were done, they suited up in their MJOLNIR Armor and lugged their Battle Packs over their shoulders. Once they were done suiting up, they headed to the Bridge for further orders.

End  
file.